

Australia comprises a land area of about 7,692,030 square kilometres (see table below). The land lies between latitudes 10°41' South (Cape York) and 43°39' South (South East Cape, Tasmania) and between longitudes 113°09' East (Steep Point, Western Australia) and 153°39' East (Cape Byron, New South Wales).

The area of Australia is almost as great as that of the United States of America (excluding Alaska), about 50% greater than Europe (excluding the former USSR) and 32 times greater than the United Kingdom.

Australia is composed of six States: New South Wales (NSW), Victoria (Vic.), Queensland (Qld), South Australia (SA), Western Australia (WA), Tasmania (Tas.) and two Territories: the Northern Territory (NT) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). The longest river in Australia is the Murray River (2,520 kilometres), which forms a natural border between NSW and Vic. The highest mountain in Australia is Kosciuszko, 2,230 metres, which is situated in NSW.

<i>State/ Territory</i>	<i>Area '000 km²</i>	<i>Estimated resident population June '98 '000</i>	<i>Capital City</i>	<i>Estimated resident population of city June '98 '000(a)</i>
NSW	801	6 342	Sydney	3 987
Vic.	227	4 661	Melbourne	3 371
Qld	1 731	3 456	Brisbane	1 575
SA	983	1 487	Adelaide	1 088
WA	2 530	1 831	Perth	1 342
Tas.	68	472	Hobart	195
NT	1 349	190	Darwin	87
ACT	2	308	Canberra	308
Aust.	7 692	18 750		

(a) Capital City Statistical Division.

AGRICULTURE

		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Gross value of agriculture	\$m	23 750	27 452	28 090
Crops	\$m	11 132	15 397	16 138
Livestock slaughtering etc.	\$m	6 616	6 193	6 190
Livestock products	\$m	5 994	5 851	5 754
		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Wheat production	'000 t	22 924	19 224	21 122
Meat production (excluding poultry)	'000 t	2 727	2 927	2 994
Wool production	'000 t	728	704	n.y.a.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Balance on current account	\$m	-17 818	-22 776	-32 417
Net goods	\$m	1 496	-3 546	-12 860
Net services	\$m	74	-1 200	-2 073
Net income	\$m	-19 307	-17 955	-17 534
Net current transfers	\$m	-81	-75	50
Balance on capital account	\$m	1 317	1 127	1 197
Balance on financial account	\$m	15 992	21 504	30 519

BUILDING

		1996-97	1997-98	1998
New houses completed	'000	83	94	99
Value of new houses completed	\$m	9 266	11 176	11 731
New other residential building completed	'000	36	37	39
Value of new other residential building completed	\$m	3 731	4 510	5 130
Value of new residential building completed	\$m	12 997	15 686	16 861
Value of non-residential building completed(a)	\$m	12 755	13 259	14 026

(a) Valued at \$50,000 or more.

CLIMATE

	Mean annual rainfall mm	Mean daily hours of sun-shine	Mean temperature			
			January		July	
			Max. °C	Min. °C	Max. °C	Min. °C
Canberra	633	7.4	28.5	13.6	11.5	0.0
Sydney	1 220	6.7	25.8	18.6	16.1	8.0
Melbourne	660	5.5	25.8	14.1	13.3	5.8
Brisbane	1 146	7.5	29.4	20.7	20.4	9.5
Adelaide	554	7.4	28.5	16.6	15.1	7.4
Perth	868	8.0	29.7	17.9	17.4	9.0
Hobart	623	5.9	21.5	11.8	11.6	4.5
Darwin	1 534	8.4	32.4	30.7	25.2	19.7

Hottest day ever recorded: 16.1.1889, 53.1°C, Cloncurry, Qld.

Coldest day ever recorded: 18.6.1994, -23.0°C, Charlotte Pass, NSW.

Source: Bureau of Meteorology.

CONSUMER PRICE AND OTHER PRICE INDEXES

		1997-98	1998-99
CPI weighted av. of 8 capital cities, all groups	1989-90=100.0	120.3	121.8
Export	1989-90=100.0	98.9	96.7
Import	1989-90=100.0	115.4	119.9
Building materials-house	1989-90=100.0	118.2	119.5
Building materials-other	1989-90=100.0	114.2	115.2
Manufacturing			
Materials used	1989-90=100.0	107.0	105.9
Articles produced	1988-89=100.0	123.4	123.1

DEMOGRAPHY

		1996	1997	1998
Population at 30 June	'000	18 311	18 524	18 751
Births	'000	250	254	249
Deaths	'000	126	127	129
Marriages	'000	106	107	111
Divorces	'000	52	51	51
Overseas movement of persons		1988	1993	1998
Five years ended 30 June				
Permanent and long-term				
Arrivals	'000	942	1 156	1 235
Departures	'000	481	668	791

EDUCATION

Expenditure		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Government expenditure	\$m	22 763	24 203	25 082
Private expenditure	\$m	6 715	7 387	8 208
School students		1996	1997	1998
Government	'000	2 221.6	2 230.0	2 239.4
Non-government	'000	921.5	941.6	959.3
Higher education students(a)	'000	634.1	658.8	671.9

(a) Source: Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

EMPLOYEE EARNINGS AND HOURS

		1997	1998	1999
Average weekly total earnings, full-time adult employees (May)	\$	736.80	767.80	790.60
		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Average weekly hours worked by full-time workers	hours	42.4	42.5	41.1
Males	hours	43.9	44.1	42.7
Females	hours	39.4	39.4	37.9

FINANCE

Government finance		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Revenue (all governments)	\$m	163 926	177 327	185 643
Commonwealth income tax, persons	\$m	60 605	66 280	70 785
Total outlay (all governments)	\$m	192 205	192 155	196 412
Final consumption expenditure	\$m	82 721	86 217	91 500
Personal benefit payments	\$m	43 809	46 119	46 533
Expenditure on new fixed assets	\$m	14 157	15 069	15 914
Private finance		1997	1998	1999
Assets of selected financial institutions (June balances)				
Banks(a)	\$m	534 616	586 412	654 741
Other depository corporations(a)	\$m	159 956	180 207	n.y.a.
Life offices and superannuation funds	\$m	149 850	158 251	168 027
Pension funds	\$m	257 034	300 549	343 398
Financial intermediaries	\$m	119 600	161 200	150 300
Consumer finance commitments		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Housing finance	\$m	49 978	54 663	61 471
Personal finance	\$m	35 568	42 921	46 576

(a) Source: Australian Financial Institutions Commission; Reserve Bank of Australia.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS 1997–98

Country	Balance on merchandise trade \$US million	Consumer price index (all items) 1995=100.0	Producer price index 1995 =100.0
Australia	-1 940	103.7	102.8
Canada	12 560	104.2	101.2
France	29 180	104.0	96.0
Germany	73 480	104.3	100.5
Italy	27 500	108.2	103.3
Japan	100 230	102.5	97.6
New Zealand	-540	104.8	100.2
OECD Major 7	n.a.	105.9	100.9
United Kingdom	-32 440	109.3	104.2
United States of America	-235 460	107.0	102.1

	Wages index 1995=100.0	Employment index 1995=100.0	Unemploy- ment rate(a) %
Australia	n.y.a.	104.4	8.0
Canada	120.1	106.1	8.4
France	123.0	102.2	11.7
Germany	n.y.a.	99.6	9.4
Italy	136.6	100.9	12.3
Japan	118.3	100.9	4.1
New Zealand	n.a.	103.4	7.5
OECD Major 7	126.3	103.2	6.4
United Kingdom	147.5	105.3	6.3
United States of America	123.2	105.3	4.5

(a) As at 30 June.

Source: OECD.

INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT POSITION

		1996	1997	1998
Net foreign liabilities at 30 June	\$m	276 207	306 548	340 417
Foreign investment in Australia	\$m	458 210	512 254	569 803
Australian investment abroad	\$m	-179 121	-209 141	-248 911
Net foreign debt at 30 June	\$m	193 170	212 820	227 033
		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Net foreign equity, ratios to GDP	%	16.9	16.6	21.2
Net foreign debt, ratios to GDP	%	39.9	40.1	38.4

INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE

		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Total exports	\$m	78 932	87 769	86 000
Total imports	\$m	78 998	90 684	97 623
Major export commodities				
Machinery and transport equipment	\$m	10 683	11 111	10 324
Metalliferous ores and metal scrap	\$m	9 051	10 422	10 665
Coal, coke and briquettes	\$m	8 005	9 587	9 302
Gold, non-monetary	\$m	4 717	6 263	6 335
Non-ferrous metals	\$m	4 434	5 319	5 399
Meat	\$m	2 958	3 731	4 000
Wheat	\$m	4 300	3 627	3 396
Wool	\$m	2 930	3 066	1 993
Major import commodities customs value				
Machinery	\$m	25 760	28 672	30 673
Transport equipment	\$m	11 022	13 236	14 752
Chemicals and related products	\$m	9 028	10 276	11 434

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LABOUR FORCE

		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Annual averages				
Employed persons	'000	8 354.7	8 461.4	8 638.4
Unemployed persons	'000	792.4	764.2	718.2
Unemployment rate	%	8.7	8.3	7.6
		1997	1998	1999
Job vacancies, May 1999	'000	58.1	73.3	71.1
		1996	1997	1998
Trade union membership, August	%	31.0	30.0	28.0
Industrial disputes, work days lost, year ended 30 June	'000	928.5	534.2	526.3

MANUFACTURING

	Unit of quantity	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Electricity	mill.kW.h	167 544	168 415	176 212
Tobacco and cigarettes	t	20 390	22 193	21 257
Automotive gasoline	mill.L	18 358	18 084	18 592
Ready mixed concrete	'000 m ³	14 556	15 544	17 412
Alumina	'000 t	13 312	13 253	13 538
Automotive diesel oil	mill.L	12 202	12 968	13 183
Blooms and slabs of iron or steel	'000 t	7 951	7 775	8 356
Basic iron, spiegeleisen and sponge iron	'000 t	7 553	7 346	7 928
Portland cement	'000 t	6 397	6 701	7 236
Hardwood woodchips	'000 t	4 828	4 779	5 665
Aviation turbine fuel	mill.L	4 882	5 284	5 423
		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Employment at end of June(a)	'000	923.1	946.3	965.0
Wages and salaries(b)	\$m	29 902	32 634	34 135
Turnover	\$m	197 963	208 348	214 355

(a) Including working proprietors. (b) Excludes the drawings of working proprietors.

MINING

		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Iron ore	'000 t	137 525	137 267	162 480
Black coal	'000 t	191 903	194 492	205 442
Brown coal	'000 t	50 679	54 281	58 886
Crude oil (incl. condensate)	ML	31 301	30 763	29 130
Natural gas	GL	17 486	19 169	n.a.
Liquefied natural gas	'000 t	6 888	7 346	n.a.

NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Gross domestic product chain volume measure	\$m	515 868	532 204	556 923
Gross fixed capital formation				
Private	\$m	89 822	98 730	111 015
Public	\$m	22 977	22 161	20 915
Final consumption expenditure				
Households	\$m	301 571	312 935	332 311
General government	\$m	95 200	97 810	103 581

RETAIL TURNOVER

		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Food	\$m	52 464	52 819	54 616
Clothing and softgood retailing	\$m	8 681	8 525	8 764
Recreational good retailing	\$m	7 683	7 402	7 621
Hospitality and selected other services	\$m	23 095	21 913	22 428
Total retail turnover	\$m	130 364	130 251	134 582

TOURISM

		1996	1997	1998
Inbound visitors	'000	4 165	4 318	4 167
Australians travelling abroad	'000	2 732	2 933	3 161
Major destinations of Australian travellers				
New Zealand	'000	414.9	406.9	470.1
United States of America	'000	331.1	352.0	322.7
United Kingdom	'000	289.1	322.3	343.3
Indonesia	'000	259.8	310.7	349.6
Total all travellers	'000	2 732.0	2 932.8	3 161.1

TRANSPORT

		1996	1997	1998
Motor vehicles on register				
Passenger vehicles	'000	9 022	9 240	9 561
Light commercial vehicles, trucks, non-freight carrying trucks, buses	'000	2 076	2 112	2 177
Motor cycles	'000	304	313	329

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED

Annual periods shown as, for example, 1999 refer to the year ended 31 December 1999; those shown as, for example 1998–99 refer to the year ended June 1999. Values are shown in Australian dollars (\$) unless another currency is specified. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between the sums of the component items and totals.

°C	— degrees Celsius	n.c.	— not collected
\$m	— million dollars	MJ	— megajoules
GL	— gigalitres	MkWh	— mega kilowatt hours
kms	— kilometres	n.y.a.	— not yet available
mill.	— million	p	— preliminary data
ML	— megalitres	'000	— thousand
mm	— millimetres	t	— tonnes
n.a.	— not available		

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Photograph: Homebush Stadium (courtesy of Julian Andrews, Sun Herald).